



NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: Wednesday, March 22, 2006, -- 06 - 018
District: District 2 - Redding
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caltrans Begins Protective Covering Work on Pit River Bridge

REDDING – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 2 will begin construction of a 3,000 foot protective covering under the concrete roadway of the Pit River Bridge to facilitate deck replacement and ensure the deck work does not adversely affect the Union Pacific Railroad or the lake below. Work will begin on March 28, 2006, weather permitting, and will require closure of the number two northbound lane (lane furthest from the center divide) at this time. Speed limits have been reduced to 45 MPH, motorists may experience minor delays. Buoys will be positioned on the lake directly below the construction area. Boaters are advised to use caution around the bridge and steer clear of the buoy system.

Built in 1942 by the Bureau of Reclamation as part of the Central Valley project, the Pit River Bridge has a steel truss design supporting a concrete upper deck serving motorists on Interstate 5 and a lower railway used by Union Pacific Railroad. The 64-year-old concrete deck, along with portions added during a widening project in the mid 60s, shows advanced signs of fatigue. Harsh winter weather, de-icing agents, increased traffic and larger, heavier truckloads have all taken their toll resulting in the need to replace the deck.

The Bridge, located fourteen miles north of Redding, is a critical link of the I-5 corridor. Used for moving goods and services through northern California, it has average traffic volumes exceeding 20,000 vehicles per day. Signs alerting motorists of the "bridge work and 45 MPH ahead" Have been posted and the California Highway Patrol will be out enforcing the speed limit.

The \$6.5 million contract to construct the protective cover was awarded to J.F. Shea Inc., of Redding. Project completion is scheduled for late July 2006. A larger project to replace the concrete deck will be advertised this summer.

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NOTE: *An electronic version of this news release is available on the Internet at the following web address:* http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist2/news_releases.htm

